

From: Jones, Dave
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 11/16/01 4:11pm
Subject: Let competition reign free...

Greetings,

First off, allow me to thank you for setting up this e-mail address. I've wanted to voice several opinions on this ongoing trial for quite some time and never really had a place to send them.

Next, let me say in brief, do NOT let Microsoft off the hook.

As a long-time computer user (since around 1984), and computer professional, I can attest to the monopolistic practices of Microsoft. Unfortunately, in my opinion, I don't think the trial went deep enough into the technology and the practices Microsoft uses to eliminate competition. Seeing however as this process is winding down, it doesn't make much sense to lay out a point-by-point letter to you now.

I would like to make mention of a recent tactic Microsoft tried to pull to lock more users and companies into spending more money and being more ingrained into Microsoft products. Several months ago Microsoft announced that they would be invalidating all licenses on any of their OS products that were older than Windows ME (for home users) and Windows 2000 (for business users). This means that a user of Windows NT4 would no longer be able to receive support from Microsoft, nor would Microsoft continue to develop upgrades and software patches for the OS to fix things like security holes because, in their eyes, the product was no longer valid. This equates to buying a car with a 10 year 100,000 mile warranty, taking it into the dealer shop two years later to have a hazardous defect repaired and not being able to get any parts for it because the company "discontinued the model."

Fortunately, based on public opinion (which obviously wasn't very positive) Microsoft decided to revoke their plans and statement for the time being to re-evaluate their decision. However, the point remains, Microsoft was saying "You buy our latest and greatest stuff, or you're screwed." Even though, at least on this day, Microsoft has not gone forward with this business practice, the fact that they started the ball rolling (i.e.. public announcements were made, letters of notice sent to corporations, etc) to force people to upgrade shows just what a bully they are.

That's the most recent item I can think of to bring to your attention. I could obviously go on about how their forcing/tying of software makes my job harder, and my home computing experience less than enjoyable most of the time. How their "Trade Secret" OEM licensing scheme forces manufactures to put only Microsoft OS's and Software on PC's they sell, eliminating choice at the consumer end. How they force software developers to "comply or die"

just to get their software to run somewhat decently on the Windows OS platform. Yes, I could go on about it, but I'm sure you've heard it all before.

In closing, I'd just like to reiterate, Microsoft needs to change. And since they don't seem to be willing to do it on their own, someone needs to change them. If they were willing to force their customers to upgrade even after a guilty verdict was brought upon them, it's obvious they aren't afraid. I have faith in you, my government, our government, to do what is right and strike some fear into Microsoft.

Very Respectfully,

David Jones
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